

9-30-98

FACT SHEET

PROPOSED AIR TOXICS RULE FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF AMINO AND PHENOLIC RESINS

TODAY'S ACTION...

- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is issuing a proposed regulation to reduce the emission of air toxics to the atmosphere from the manufacture of amino and phenolic resins. Air toxics, also referred to as hazardous air pollutants, are those pollutants that are either known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects.
- Amino and phenolic resins are used in the manufacture of plywood, particle board, adhesives, plastic parts, and other products.
- In addition to formaldehyde and phenol, other chemicals such as methanol, xylene, and toluene may be used in the reaction process to produce amino and phenolic resins.
- EPA worked in partnership with major stakeholders, including representatives from industry and States in developing the proposal.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS?

- The proposed rule will reduce emissions of a number of air toxics, including formaldehyde, phenol, methanol, xylene, and toluene by 356 Mg/yr, representing a 55 percent reduction from 1992 levels. Formaldehyde, for example, is a probable human carcinogen, and short-term and long-term exposure to significant levels of formaldehyde may cause irritation of the eye, nose, throat, and, at higher levels, the respiratory tract in humans.

BACKGROUND

- Under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, EPA is required to regulate emissions of 188 listed toxic air pollutants. (Note that this list originally referenced 189 pollutants, but EPA has subsequently removed the chemical caprolactum from the list.) On July 16, 1992, EPA published a list of source categories that emit one or more of these air toxics. For listed categories of "major" sources (those that have the potential to emit 10 tons/year or more of a listed pollutant or 25 tons/year or more of a combination of pollutants), the Act requires EPA to develop standards that will require the application of maximum achievable control technology (MACT).
- EPA's published list of source categories to be regulated includes major sources that manufacture amino and phenolic resins.

WHO WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED RULE?

- Affected facilities include new as well as existing amino and phenolic resin manufacturing facilities.
- EPA has identified a total of 100 facilities engaged in the manufacture of amino or phenolic resins. EPA estimates that approximately 40 of these facilities are major sources of air toxics.

WHAT DO THE PROPOSED STANDARDS REQUIRE?

- There are several phases of the manufacturing process that can result in emissions of air toxics. EPA's proposal would establish either emission limits or control efficiency requirements for the following operations: reactor batch process vents; non-reactor batch process vents; continuous process vents; storage tanks; equipment leaks (pumps, compressors, agitators, pressure relief devices, sampling connection systems, open-ended valves or lines, valves, connectors, and instrumentation systems); wastewater emissions; and heat exchange systems.

HOW MUCH WILL THE PROPOSED RULE COST?

- In total, EPA estimates the capital cost of the proposal for all affected facilities to be about \$2.1 million .
- EPA estimates the total annual cost of the proposal to be about \$2.5 million for existing sources. EPA estimates that there will be no new sources in the next 5 years.

HOW DOES EPA'S PROPOSED RULE PROMOTE POLLUTION PREVENTION?

- EPA's proposal allows the use of an alternative emission standard for meeting the batch reactor vents requirements. The alternative standard allows a facility to comply by reducing emissions below 0.0017 kilogram of hazardous air pollutant per Megagram of product produced. A facility can meet the alternative emissions requirement by either installation of controls, pollution prevention measure, or a combination of both.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION...

- Interested parties can download the rule from EPA's web site on the Internet under "recent actions" at the following address: (<http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg>). For further information about today's rule, contact Mr. John Schaefer of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-0296.
- EPA's Office of Air and Radiation's homepage on the Internet contains a wide range of information on the air toxics program, as well as many other air pollution programs and issues. The Office of Air and Radiation's home page address is:
<http://www.epa.gov/oar>.